GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3089
ANSWERED ON:12.03.2003
ADVERSE EFFECTS OF OXYTOCIN
RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether use of Oxytocin injections on milch animals for extracting milk and in vegetables and fruits to enhance their growth cause adverse effects on health of bovines and humans; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to check sale of these injections?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA)

(a) No, Sir. Oxtytocin injection is included in the WHO/National list of essential drugs and has medial importance in the medical and veterinary practice because it is used to induce uterine contractions in pregnant women and cattle for easy delivery. There is no reported adverse impact of this chemical on the health of humans/bovines. However, the misuse of Oxytocin injection has been reported milching animals, particularly in buffaloes, at the time of milking, under the erroneous impression that it increases milk production. Oxytocin, when injected into the animals, get rapidly metabolized in liver and kidney to undetectable levels. The half life of Oxytocin varies from 3 to 12 minutes. In humans, Oxytocin is not observed when taken orally as it is converted into aminoacids by peptide digesting enzymes in the gastro-intestinal tract. The chances that it might be filtered in milk are non-existent.

(b) To prevent any misuse of this drug, the following measures have been initiated:

(i) Oxytocin has been notified as a Schedule 11 drug and can be sold only against the prescription of the registered medical/veterinary practitioner.

(ii) This Ministry has made it mandatory to market Oxytocin injection in single unit blister pack only.

(iii) Instructions have also been issued to all State Drug Controllers to regulate and monitor manufacture and distribution of Oxytocin.

(iv) Department of Animal Husbandry have also issued instructions to all the Directors of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Services to educate the farmers in the States about appropriate use of drug. They have also been advised to approach the State Drug Controllers for regulating the use of drug by distributors and retailers.